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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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ICA FOR PGM/RC, EA, VOA/PF, PGM/P, PGM/RM/RR

STATE FOR CROGERS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS:
SUBJECT: THAI PRESS COMPLAINT - MONDALE VISIT

1. THAI LANGUAGE PRINT MEDIA TODAY IS PROTESTING SOME OF THE SECURITY AND POOLING ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. THE POOLING ARRANGEMENT FOR THE REFUGEE CENTER VISIT PROVIDED FOR 15 FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AND 15 THAI NEWSMEN TO ACCOMPANY THE VICE PRESIDENT TO THE THIRD FLOOR OF THE CENTER. THIS PROCEDURE WAS DICTATED BY THE EXTREMELY CROWDED CONDITIONS IN THE THIRD FLOOR DORMITORY AND BY THE FACT THAT CORRESPONDENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE SQUEEZED INTO A NARROW AISLE BETWEEN BUNKS. ICA AND ADVANCE PARTY WORKED OUT THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT POOL ASSIGNMENTS, WHILE RTG MOFA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT WERE TO SELECT THE THAI POOL. AT THE REFUGEE CENTER, INSTEAE OF
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SELECTING A POOL, THE RTG OFFICIAL MERELY HELD OUT THE SIFTEEN BADGES AND THEY WERE PICKED UP ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVE BASIS.

2. PAPERS ALSO COMPLAINED THAT A "PREGNANT" THAI JOURNALIST WAS MAN-HANDLED BY SECURITY AT THE CENTER. MISSION OFFICERS AT THE SITE DID NOT SEE THE ALLEGED

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INCIDENT AND ARE SKEPTICAL.

3. THE THAI PRESS COMPLAINT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE INVOLVED THAI SECURITY'S BODY SEARCHES OF JOURNALISTS ENTERING THE NEWSROOM. WE ARE MAKING THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO INQUIRING PRESS ON AN IF-ASKED BASIS (AND MADE THEM TO LOCAL AP CORRESPONDENT WHO IS FILING A STORY):

4. WITH REGARD TO THE VISIT TO DIN DAENG REFUGEE TRANSIT CENTER, ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PRESS WERE WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE BETWEEN OFFICIALS FOR THE U.S. AND RTG. THESE ARRANGEMENTS ALLOWED OPEN ACCESS TO THE GROUND FLOOR AND COURTYARD OF THE CENTER FOR ANY JOURNALIST CARRYING FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESS CREDENTIALS. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, NO ACCREDITED JOURNALIST WAS DENIED ACCESS TO THE CENTER.

5. BECAUSE OF THE EXTREMELY CROWDED CONDITIONS ON THE THIRD FLOOR OF THE CENTER, IT WAS AGREED TO LIMIT ACCESS FOR THIS SEGMENT OF THE VISIT TO FIFTEEN THAI AND FIFTEEN AMERICAN JOURNALISTS. TO INSURE FAIRNESS, IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE THAI SIDE WOULD HANDLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE FIFTEEN PASSES FOR THE THAI JOURNALISTS, AND THE AMERICAN SIDE WOULD DO THE SAME FOR THE AMERICAN JOURNALISTS. THE AMERICAN SIDE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ISSUING THE FIFTEEN PASSES FOR THE THIRD FLOOR TO THE THAI JOURNALISTS.

6. REGARDING THE PRESS CONFERENCE, THE AHERICAN SIDE DID NOT REQUEST BODY SEARCHES, AND REQUESTED THE SEARCHES BE WAIVED. VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE AGREED TO TALK WITH ANY REPORTERS WHO DID NOT ENTER THE PRESS CONFE ENCE, BUT THEY HAD DEPARTED BY THE TIME THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS OVER.
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